



# NOTES FROM THE RANGE

Feb. 26, 2014



## Washburn Tech Signing Day

Tech Ed in Kansas is soaring. Our high school tech ed program has seen a 75% increase in enrollment in the past two years.

On Feb. 20, more than 500 prospective students committed to Washburn Tech during a National Letter of Intent Signing Day.

These students are positioned for good jobs & good wages and are creating a skilled Kansas workforce for the future.

## The importance of all-day Kindergarten

Most school districts in Kansas currently provide all-day kindergarten for our youngest students. Why then did I include funding for all-day kindergarten in my proposed budget and why is it so important, not just to me, but to all of us?

Quite simply, this is a strategic investment to help our youngest Kansans be better prepared for success, in school and in life. There is considerable data to show that students who participate in all-day K are ready to read at grade-appropriate levels and are more involved and productive in school.

In the past few weeks, I have visited several schools to meet with teachers and principals to discuss the importance of all-day K. These hard working educators are dedicated to their students' success.

I have been asked if we can afford all-day K. I would say we can't afford not to make this critical investment. Some schools use funds intended for at-risk students to provide all-day K, or charge fees to parents. We can ensure that at-risk funds are used to help struggling students achieve and prosper and still fund all-day K for Kansas children.



Roesland Elementary School Kindergarten Students



Group Hug! At Pauline Central Primary School

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## Pictures From the Road



I rode with a snow plow crew to see first-hand the effects of our early February snow storm



Snow plow in action during our February storm. Be sure to give plows room to do their jobs



Matt Besler, Seth Sinovic and Robb Heineman of the MLS Champion Sporting KC visit the Capitol



This WWII veteran shared his photo book with me when I visited the VA hospital in Topeka

## The importance of all-day Kindergarten continued

In kindergarten classes, I have watched young boys and girls work together in groups, helping each other with projects and learning critical thinking skills.

Funding all-day K is an investment in our future; one that will require an increase of \$16M per year for the next five years.

In addition to benefitting our kindergarten students, it will put hundreds if not thousands of dollars back in the pockets of parents who currently defray the costs of all-day K in their school districts.

Unemployment in Kansas is at a record low. We have had back-to-back years of creating

more than 10,000 new jobs. Through tough decisions and sound fiscal management we ended fiscal year 2013 with \$709M in the bank and a projected ending balance of 8 percent for the current fiscal year.

This is a strategic, targeted investment and the time to do it is now. It is important to remember also that kindergarten in Kansas, whether half- or all-day, is and will remain, completely voluntary.

*Sam Brownback*